



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food
and Agriculture

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FACT SHEET

AQUACULTURE RESEARCH PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR 2014 GRANTS

OVERVIEW

ON OCT. 22, 2014, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced \$1.3 million in funding to support the Aquaculture Research Program. This initiative will support the development of environmentally and economically sustainable aquaculture in the United States, and generate new science-based information and innovations to address industry constraints.

GRANTS

In fiscal year 2014, the Aquaculture Research program funded projects that directly address major constraints to the U.S. aquaculture industry. Funded projects focus on one or more of the following program priorities: 1) genetics of commercial aquaculture species, 2) critical disease issues impacting aquaculture species, 3) design of environmentally and economically sustainable aquaculture production systems, and 4) economic research for increasing aquaculture profitability.

IMPACT

Results from the program will help improve the profitability of the U.S. aquaculture industry, reduce the U.S. trade deficit, increase domestic food security, provide markets for U.S.-produced grain products, increase domestic aquaculture business investment opportunities, and provide more jobs for rural and coastal America.

FISCAL YEAR 2014 AQUACULTURE RESEARCH AWARDS

Auburn University, Auburn, AL

\$310,000 | The program will identify closely linked markers to the major gene locus controlling low-oxygen tolerance and validates and applies such markers for selection of channel catfish and blue catfish used for the production of hybrid catfish, providing immediate benefits to the catfish industry.

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

\$313,739 | This proposed project will promote development of a sustainable sugar kelp industry that can help revitalize working waterfronts and increase employment and economic opportunities for seafood production, processing, and distribution services in Southern New England and New York.

The Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA

\$310,000 | This project aims to develop efficient sterilization techniques. Sterilization of fish would be invaluable to minimizing the impact of escaped GE fish lines and would also provide increased culture performance by preventing loss of energy to gonad development.

Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS

\$310,000 | This study will evaluate the 35 novel *E. ictaluri* mutants already developed as live attenuated vaccine candidates and establish an optimal immersion-oral vaccination regime.

"Aquaculture is a thriving industry in the United States, and will experience a 70 percent increase in the next 30 years in both domestic and international markets. With cooperation from our land-grant university partners, we are able to address this growing demand by creating sustainable solutions to ensure food security for the future."

—Sonny Ramaswamy, Director
National Institute of Food and Agriculture